



WITHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1941.

Public Health Offices,  
St. Peter's Close,  
Bocking,  
Braintree.

December, 1942.

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit to you a brief report on the health and sanitary conditions in the Urban District in 1941. This review follows the same lines as that submitted a short time ago for 1940. The same arrangements having been made for the preservation of all the necessary records until after the war.

Again it is pleasing to be able to report that the general health of the district remained satisfactory during the year.

GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES.

There was no alteration under this heading in 1941.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

Water.

The chlorination apparatus at both Bradwell Springs and the Braintree Road Waterworks was installed and in operation early in the year. Both of these sources were used for supply purposes.

A sample taken from Bradwell Springs on 14th August 1941 was reported on by the County Bacteriologist as follows :-

CHEMICAL RESULTS IN PARTS PER 100,000.

Appearance	Bright - few particles of mineral and organic debris.		
Colour	Normal	Odour	Nil.
Reaction pH	Neutral: 7.0	Free Carbonic Acid	3.5
Electric Conductivity at 20°C.		760 Total Solids	
		dried at 180°C	51.0
Chlorine in Chlorides	3.0	Alkalinity as	
		Calcium Carbonate	26.5
Hardness: Total	36.0	Temporary 24.5 Permanent	11.5
Nitrogen in Nitrates	0.44	Nitrites	Absent
Free Ammonia	0.0012	Ammoniacal Nitrogen	-
Albuminoid Ammonia	0.0008	Albuminoid Nitrogen	-
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hrs at 80°F	0.010		
Metals	Iron	0.012	Other metals absent.

BACTERIOLOGICAL RESULTS.

Number of "Bacteria" growing )	1 day at 37°C	2 days at 37°C
on Agar per cc. or ml.in )	1	1

3 days at 20°C  
-

The Bacillus Coli Present in - Absent in 100c.c.

This sample is reasonably clear and bright, containing only a few particles of debris in suspension. The water is very hard in character, although not to an excessive degree, contains no excess of saline or mineral matter in solution, no metals apart from a negligible trace of iron and is of satisfactory organic and bacterial purity.

These results are consistent with a wholesome water, suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

No sample was taken from the Braintree Road Waterworks in 1941.

#### Drainage and Sewerage.

##### Witham Sewage Works.

Samples of the effluent taken by the Southend Waterworks Company numbered 47, of these 40 were satisfactory and 7 were unsatisfactory. Those taken by the Essex County Council produced 4 satisfactory results.

##### Silver End Sewage Works.

The two samples taken by the Essex County Council during 1941 were both unsatisfactory, but not to a marked degree, and did not indicate any deterioration of the works.

#### Public Cleansing and Salvage.

The combined collection of refuse and salvage instituted in 1940 continued throughout 1941.

#### HOUSING.

A total of sixteen licences to occupy condemned houses were granted during the year, these being extensions of the original period in the case of the eight houses licensed for the first time in 1940.

#### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

##### Milk.

Inspections were carried out of all the premises in the district engaged in the production or sale of milk. No samples were taken during the year.

##### Meat.

Similar arrangements to those prevailing in 1940 operated in 1941 as far as meat inspection was concerned.

The number of animals slaughtered during the period was 4,768 of which 4,669 or 96% were inspected. As a result of inspection the total weight of meat and offal condemned was 22,961 lbs. (10 tons. 8 cwts. 13 lbs.) of which 14,104 lbs. (6 tons. 5 cwts. 3 qrs. 20 lbs.) was affected by tuberculosis.

Of all the animals inspected 3.31% were found to be affected by tuberculosis and 10% by other diseased conditions.

Visits paid by the Sanitary Inspector during the year were 300, of which 293 were to slaughterhouses and 7 to butchers' shops.



## INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The following cases of Infectious Disease were reported during the year:-

Scarlet Fever	2	Pneumonia	6
Whooping Cough	50	Puerperal Pyrexia	1
Erysipelas	3	Cerebro Spinal Fever	1
Measles	306	Dysentery	20
		Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1

Cases of Measles were spread more or less uniformly throughout the first six months of the year. Most of the cases of whooping cough occurred during the last three months of 1941. In the case of both these diseases the affections were mild in character.

All the cases of dysentery occurred at the Bridge Home, the Witham Branch of the Royal Eastern Counties Institution.

## Diphtheria Pyophylaxis.

The scheme for the immunisation of children under 15 years of age against diphtheria was in full working order in 1941. During the year visits were paid to all the schools in the district and regular sessions were also held monthly at the Child Welfare Centre, Congregational Hall, Newland Street, Witham. The total number of children completely immunised at the end of 1941 was as follows :-

Children aged 5 to 15 (i.e., school children)	732.
Children under 5 years (i.e., pre school children)	231.

These figures represent approximately 55.7% and 37% of the child population of the district in the respective age groups.

The successful carrying out of the campaign has been largely due to the co-operative action of the County Council and the local Urban Council.

## Tuberculosis.

The total number of cases on the Tuberculosis Register at the end of the year was 37, and was made up as follows :-

Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
Male	Female	Male	Female
12	13	9	3

New cases notified during the year numbered 11. These were made up as follows :-

Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
Male	Female.	Male	Female
5	6	-	-

During the year there were two deaths of patients on the Tuberculosis Register.

## EVACUATION.

As in 1940 the number of evacuees grew fewer as the year went on. The Hostel at Brookcote, Chipping Hill, was, on the instructions of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Health, reserved for girls found difficult to billet from both Witham Urban District and other districts in the region. Owing to staffing difficulties, the Hostel was closed down completely in December, the children being transferred to another district and the building taken over by the County Council for use as a war-time Day Nursery.

EMERGENCY SERVICES.

Much was done under this heading particularly by the Sanitary Inspector. Such work included the organisation of the Food Treatment Squad for dealing with foodstuffs contaminated by poison gas, administrative work in connection with the Casualty Services and the setting up of an emergency mortuary.

In conclusion, I should like to thank the members of the Council for their support, and the Council Officers for their help during 1941.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

Wm. H. H. H.

Medical Officer of Health.